



**MICHIGAN**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
P.O. Box 30014  
LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909-7514

**MINUTES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**

**Wednesday, June 3, 2015                      10:30 a.m.      Room 519 House Office Building, Lansing**

Representative Lauwers, Chair, called the meeting to order.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Representatives Lauwers, Cole, Franz, Glardon, Johnson, Outman, Rendon, B. Roberts, Sheppard, Vaupel, Brunner, Darany, Talabi, Driskell, LaVoy.

**ABSENT/EXCUSED:** Representatives Courser, Garrett.

Representative Cole made a motion to adopt the minutes of the meeting held on May 20, 2015. No objections being offered, the minutes were accepted as presented.

Representative Cole made a motion to excuse absent members. No objections being offered, absent members were excused.

Dr. James Averill, State Veterinarian, provided an update regarding avian influenza and steps being taken to assist in safety measures, including cancellation of live poultry exhibitions and expositions at 2015 fairs and events and activities to provide youth with education and marketing education by other means. No human cases of this strain of influenza within humans nor with other species of animals has been presented in the state at this time. Dr. Averill also discussed precautions and procedures with regard to livestock, equipment and property. Other topics reviewed included: Michigan and import/export restrictions; discussion of the of possible vaccines in the future; that at this time, US livestock products to Russia and China; and monitoring water fowl exposure and circulation in wild bird population regarding the spread of disease by human activities.

Diane Smith, Executive Director, Michigan Apple Committee, spoke to the Committee regarding the following topics: the Mission and activities of the Michigan Apple Committee; that Michigan's number one fruit crop is apples; the number of apple growers in Michigan and the number of apple trees in commercial production; marketing, education and research; P.A. 232; funding; marketing fresh and processed apples; exportation to other countries; cross-promotions; buying local and healthy living programs; partnership with Pure Michigan; research and food safety; consumer education; and challenges and concerns, particularly with regard to agriculture labor.

A discussion regarding pollination and bees was provided by: Matt Blakely, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs for the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD); Mike Hansen MDARD Regional Manager and State Apiarist; and Brian Rowe, representing the MDARD Pesticide Section. Topics reviewed included: apiary inspections, parasitic mites effect on bees; mite control; pesticide control and education of products for beekeepers; inspections and changes in the law; permitting and registration; tracking of Michigan

colonies; beekeeper pollination activities and procedures; bee losses and how to address the issue; colony collapse disorder; over winter loss surveys and management surveys; maintaining population; habitat loss; monotypic crops and pollination effects; parasites and viruses and the effect on honey bees; lack of inspection programs; pollinator habitat improvement study; EPA pesticide training for inspectors to assist beekeepers; documentation of summer losses; managing pesticide use and pesticide restrictions; product label use standardized information; winter bee loss; development of improved EPA language for pollinators; and managed pollinator protections plans for states.

There being no additional business before the Committee, Chair Lauwers declared the meeting adjourned, the time being 11:53 a.m.

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Representative Dan Lauwers, Chair

Catherine Petroskey, Committee Clerk (517) 373-8538